

More of the Newest Verse

AFTER twenty-six years since he gave us "A Shropshire Lad," Mr. A. E. Housman's volume of "Last Poems" (Holt) comes as unheralded as many of the more important manifestations in nature. In a prefatory note he tells us that "it is not likely that he will ever be impelled to write much more"; one finds hope in the admitted possibility. These poems, called "last," are in several cases clearly of a much earlier period than the present, and their texture and substance are all of the same consummate weaving as those in the earlier book, whose lofty, grim philosophy echoes through this one. The forty-one poems now published are sealed with that perfection of form and substance which is his individual mark. Already he is seen to stand in his place among the great figures in the English choir.

His ego has been at war overseas as well as in his Cambridge study during these disappeared years since he wrote: May will be fine next year, as like as not; Oh, ay, but then we shall be twenty-four.

This note, deepened but unchanged—too deep to call "regret" and too solemn for "anger"—sounds through all his poetry, yet his heart does not break. "What of it!" says he. You can hear this bravest of bravery in many lines. Here are a few:

What evil luck soever
For me remains in store
'Tis sure much finer fellows
Have found much worse before.
So here are things to think on
That ought to make me brave.
As I strap on for fighting
My sword that will not save.

"The Box of God," by Lew Sarett (Holt), poet and interpreter of the North American Indian, is the title of a collection of these highly picturesque poems in some of which he has "sought to capture and communicate something of the poetic beauty and spiritual significance of Indian ceremonies." In the title poem he contrasts the Christian God—"kept in a house"—with the aboriginal worship out of doors.

"Mauna Roa and Other Poems" (Princeton University Press), is a slip of a book containing less than thirty short poems, by Mr. Ames Brooks, some of which are of part of the whole substance which is called poetry. The "Hymn to Persephone," the splendid sonnet "Courage" and the beautiful "Epitaph" and one or two more are marked with unusual distinction.

"Granite and Alabaster" (Macmillan) is the title chosen by Mr. Raymond Holden for a collection of subjective poems overflowing with intensity of emotion. Many of these verses were published in periodicals during the last year or two. It is their due to be brought together in this form. This poet's moods are often somber, but he is no hopeless one raging at the world, nor contemptuous of it. There is light seen in the gloom of "Rock Fowler," or in the preoccupation of "Promontory"; in such pieces as "Season's End," "February Twenty-second," "Paradox," "The

Ample Cloak," or "Bretonne" it is almost visible; in "To the Dead: New Year's Eve" or his masterly "Quatorzaine" it shines out, cool and clear.

Father O'Donnell's "Cloister and Other Poems" (Macmillan) is a volume of high spiritual beauty and clear sighted looking toward the stars. His range—in more than the accident of arrangement—is from Launcelot to St. Christopher, and the delicacy of his thought has a fine expression in his meters.

"Dramatic Legends and Other Poems," by Padraic Colum (Macmillan), is the most recent collection of this poet's distinctive verse. Four long poems in dramatic form are preceded by pieces reminiscent of life in Ireland and groups of this talented writer's more epigrammatic and graphic moods, composed with his usual fluency.

Mr. John Farrar, editor of the *Bookman*, is to be congratulated upon his singular success in preparing so varied and delightful a book as his "Bookman Anthology of Verse: 1922" (Doran). He has found room



A. E. Housman.

for examples of the current work of no less than fifty-six of the young poets of the day, including all three of the Benéts. If he had not felt obliged to stick to his rule of selecting only from the *Bookman's* own garden, he says he could have got Thomas Hardy in, with his gallant "Ancient" poem. He gives thumbnail biographical sketches of his new poets, which are welcome. If only he could have included a scrap of admonition he might well have besought his poets to agree among themselves whether to spell the word now greatly in favor in this long grass of Parnassus—"honeyed" or "honied." There is no use in so much poetic license.

"Spindrift" (Doran), is a volume by Milton Raison, a young Russian sailor, who, William McFee says, may amount to something. He has collected a small bookful of his splendidly youthful cries to Cytherea and other friends. It is much talked of and is as excellent a springboard for conversation as is Mr. John Dos Passos's new volume of verse, which he calls "A Pushcart at the Curb" (Doran). This vehicle is piled high with aromatic memories of "Winter in Castile," "Nights at Bassano," "Vagones de Tercera," "Phases of the Moon" and other delicacies, which the stranger is invited by the author, in an apt rime at the beginning, to "choose and taste."

"In Memoriam and Other Poems" by Martin Feinstein (Seltzer), is a volume of poems by the winner of the *Nation's* poetry prize; the title poem carried away that palm. These lyrical pieces are of irregular extent, vertically and laterally, and portray many moods and imaginings.

"Samphire," by John Cowper Powys (Seltzer), appears as a small book of twenty metrical pieces, which are said by the publisher to "have in them a haunting and terrible beauty as if a naked spirit were suspended over the yawning abyss of the universe." Well, it might drop; and what then?

"Leaves on the Water" (Seltzer) is a handsomely made book of sketches and tales of the Orient, some in verse and some in form of prose, by Stanley Kinmel. The collection is a reflection of Chinese and Japanese life and poetry.

"The Master Mistress" (Knopf) is a collection of bond bursting lyrics, by Rose O'Neill, illustrated by the author with sev-

eral characteristic drawings of strong and monstrous forms.

"A Jongleur Strayed" (Doubleday, Page) is the title of a collection of "Verses on Love and Other Matters, Sacred and Profane," by Richard Le Gallienne. The author prefaces this well printed book with the warning that he is but "a scrivener in the market place," who sits and writes for lovers.

Miss Stella Langdale has made a series of highly imaginative drawings to illustrate an edition of Francis Thompson's mystic poem, "The Hound of Heaven" (Dodd-Mead), and the Rev. James J. Daly, S. J., contributes a striking and expository introduction.

William Duffield & Co. publish the "Collected Poems" of Prof. John Erskine, which include all (as he says) that he wishes to keep of the contents of two or three earlier volumes together with some newer pieces.

His polished and graceful verse reflects the scholar poet.

Among other books of verse of varying quality are "The Perfume Holder and Other Poems," by Craven Langstroth Betts (White); "French Verse From Villon to Verlaine," by R. L. G. Ritchie and James M. Moore (Dutton); "The Return of Arthur," by Irvine Graff (Stratford); "Streets and Shadow," by Mercedes de Acosta (Moffat-Yard); "Poems," by Granville Lowther (Moffat-Yard); "Homespun," by Grace E. Hall (Dodd-Mead); "Because of Beauty," by Angela Morgan (Dodd-Mead); "Fire Castles," by Mawrine Hathaway (Sign of the Pen and Pad); "Spirit of the Storm and Other Poems," by David Irving Dobson (Boyle); "Rose Leaves and Old Dreams," by Georgie Reed Bradbury (Boyle), and "The Jester Book of Columbia Light Verse," edited by Otto v. St. Whitelock (Bulstrode Press).

A Trip Around the World

ALOHA AROUND THE WORLD. By Karl Vogel. Introduction by Commodore Arthur Curtiss James. G. P. Putnam Sons.

THIS is a genial and intimate account of a voyage around the world accomplished under ideal conditions:

a private yacht, with a small but congenial party of friends, unlimited time, and no fixed schedule, but with the whole circumference of the globe open before them, and all the unfrequented ports of the Seven Seas offering their respective lures. Commodore James, who contributes a brief foreword, confesses that ever since his boyhood imagination was fired by Lady Brassey's inimitable "Voyage of the Sunbeam" the dream of his life had been to circumnavigate the globe; and after thirty years of adventurous sailing in a succession of private yachts, totaling over a quarter million of nautical miles, this round the world dream has at last been accomplished in the present Aloha, the second steam yacht built expressly for the purpose. It is an auxiliary yacht, bark rigged, measuring 119 feet from figurehead to taffrail, and spreading 20,000 square feet of canvas, and although the volume offers a generous profusion of snapshots of lovely vistas, strange architecture and curious peoples, there is none in the whole collection fairer to look upon than the frontispiece showing the Aloha before a "Whole Sail Breeze—Full and By."

One obvious advantage of visiting the

far off exotic corners of the earth in this fashion is that it means fresh ovations at each new port, high social functions, and the rare privilege of beholding many curious sights and intimate ceremonies never beheld by the ordinary tourist. The volume brims over with delightful bits of local color, piquant descriptions and odd incidents, all told with a keen personal relish that kindles a contagious interest. Merely to let these pleasant pages flutter open at random and skim the headlines from the chapter on Hawaii, "Where Aloha Got Her Name," through to the closing pages on Egypt, "Where Time Began," is to get an agreeable foretaste of what the book itself contains. Especially entertaining are chapters on "Korean Cold and Pekin Dust," "Java, the Garden of the World" and "Ceylon, Earth's Jewel Box." Strong minded indeed must the woman be, says the author, who can resist the lure of the "jewel stored caves of Ali Baba that line Colombo's streets," where sapphires, moonstones, rubies, topazes and many others are found in quantities that stagger the imagination. The whole volume is overlaid with just this sort of suggestion of an invasion into the realm of the Arabian Nights, and if you do not yourself possess some practical Aladdin's Lamp to transport you to these lands of great adventure in person, there is no way of reaching them more pleasantly by proxy than through the genial pages of this book.

DR. ALBERT SHAW, Editor of *The Review of Reviews*, calls it: "The most extraordinarily interesting book I have passed under my eye for years."

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The Happy Village

CHURCH STREET. By Jean-Carter Cochran. Westminster Press.

THESE pleasant sketches do not fall into any of the sharply defined classes; they are not fiction, neither are they quite free of imagined or fanciful addition to observations of life. It is an idealized picture of existence in a happy village, in New Jersey, treating of the home, the church, neighbors, queer characters and odd happenings in an idyllic setting. Miss Cochran has charm; a delicate flavor, a daintiness and beautifully feminine quality in her comment. Whether Mr. Lawrence Abbott is fully justified in saying that the book is an "effective antidote for 'Main Street'" or not, may be open to some question, for there are not many happy villages such as she portrays to be found in this part of the world, but he is quite right in calling it a "charming and refreshing portrayal of the finer side of village life." Most of the sketches are reprinted from the *Bookman*, *Outlook* and other periodicals—in itself a cachet of merit. It is illustrated by numerous very good photographs.